

**CHAPTER 1800**  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**PRIORITY PLACEMENT PROGRAM**  
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## **CHAPTER 1800**

### **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

#### **PRIORITY PLACEMENT PROGRAM**

- References:** (a) DoD Directive 1400.20, “DoD Program for Stability of Civilian Employment,” June 16, 1981  
(b) DoD Directive 1400.25, “DoD Civilian Personnel Management System,” November 25, 1996  
(c) Title 5, United States Code  
(d) DoD 1400.20-1-M, “DoD Program for Stability of Civilian Employment,” September 1990, authorized by DoD Directive 1400.20, June 16, 1981  
(e) Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations  
(f) Title 10, United States Code  
(g) Joint Travel Regulations, Volume II

#### **A. PURPOSE**

This Chapter implements DoD Directives 1400.20 (reference (a)) and 1400.25 (reference (b)), delegates authority, and assigns specific overall responsibility for the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP) for civilian employees.

#### **B. APPLICABILITY**

This Chapter applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities (hereafter collectively referred to as the “DoD Components”).

#### **C. POLICY**

It is DoD policy under DoD Directive 1400.20 (reference (a)), DoD Directive 1400.25 (reference (b)), and the authority of the Secretary of Defense under 5 U.S.C. 301 (reference (c)) that:

1. Adverse effects on employees caused by such actions as, but not limited to, reductions-in-force (RIFs), base closures, realignments, consolidations, contracting-out actions, position classification decisions, rotations from overseas assignments, and transfers of function (TOFs) shall be avoided, to the extent possible, through a consolidated DoD PPP that offers affected employees alternative employment opportunities within the Department of Defense.
2. The PPP is the primary vehicle for placing employees who have been affected adversely through no fault of their own. DoD Components shall not establish duplicative programs.

However, within their current employing activity, employees on grade and pay retention may take precedence over Priority 1 or 2 registrants for priority placement. The policies contained in this Chapter may not be supplemented unless supplementation is expressly authorized in writing by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) (DASD(CPP)).

3. The guidance contained in this Chapter is to be used in conjunction with DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)) which establishes procedures for and implements the PPP within the Department of Defense.

4. All civilian appropriated fund positions within the Department of Defense (except positions in the Senior Executive Service or equivalent senior positions), including all those positions in civilian pay systems established under the authority of the Secretary of Defense, are subject to the PPP unless specifically excepted by DoD policy, this Chapter, DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)), or special exception. When additional staff strength is not authorized, activities facing closure or major reorganization may effect special placement authorities as specified in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

5. For program exceptions applied to activities, the activity is defined in one of two ways: either as all organizations within a DoD Component that are in the same commuting area and are supported by the same human resources office or on-site customer support unit, regardless of RIF competitive area, or as all positions in a competitive area, regardless of servicing human resources office, on-site customer support unit, or location.

6. When positions are being filled by persons with statutory or regulatory re-employment or placement entitlement (e.g., overseas return rights, return from call to military duty, administrative hearing and court decisions), such personnel actions are not subject to the PPP.

7. Eligible employees who are entitled to severance pay as a result of receiving a RIF separation notice or being scheduled for separation after declining assignment outside of their commuting area are mandatory program registrants during the RIF notice period and for one year from separation. These individuals shall be registered involuntarily for all DoD installations within their commuting area for their current grade and two grades or pay levels lower (5 CFR 550.703 (reference (e))), “reasonable offer”) and for all skills up to the maximum for which they are well qualified. All registrants shall be registered, as a minimum, for the current grade and skill of their position of record.

8. Employees are registered for the minimum area likely to provide a reasonable placement opportunity and may not by-pass or skip DoD installations or geographic areas to register for more distant locations. Civilian Assistance and Re-Employment (CARE) Coordinators may approve exceptions to revise or expand the area of referral to accommodate justified, special circumstances.

9. Employees may be denied registration if their performance or conduct is less than fully satisfactory. Performance or conduct is considered less than fully satisfactory when the registering activity has knowledge that such performance or conduct directly and negatively

affects the employee's qualifications, eligibility, or suitability for placement. This limitation remains in effect until and unless the employee's performance or conduct is determined to be fully satisfactory. After registration, an employee shall be removed immediately from the PPP when his or her performance or conduct fails to meet this standard.

10. Registrants shall be referred and matched against vacant positions using one of three priorities. These priorities are assigned by the registering civilian personnel office/human resources office (CPO/HRO) and are based on the severity of the action which resulted in PPP eligibility. The following generally describes these priorities, although when determining the priority of any specific individual, one should refer to the detailed guidance contained in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

a. Priority 1 registrants are employees, including Component Military Reserve Technicians as defined in 5 U.S.C. 8401 (30) (reference (c)) and 10 U.S.C. 10216 (reference (f)), facing separation by RIF without an offer of employment, and employees being furloughed for 6 months or more.

b. Priority 2 registrants are employees facing downgrade of two or more GS grades (or equivalent) as a result of RIF or classification action; employees who have declined transfer of function or management-directed reassignment outside their commuting area; Component Military Reserve Technicians, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 8401 (30) (reference (c)) and 10 U.S.C. 10216 (reference (f)), who are or will be separated through no fault of their own before they become eligible to receive military retired pay; and employees returning from overseas as described in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

c. Priority 3 registrants are employees who, as result of RIF, are facing downgrade of less than two GS grades (or equivalent); Component Military Reserve Technicians, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 8401 (30) (reference (c)) and 10 U.S.C. 10216 (reference (f)), who are or will be separated through no fault of their own and who are entitled to receive military retired pay immediately when they are separated from civilian service; employees returning from overseas assignments; and other registrants specified in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

11. When well-qualified Priority 1 or 2 registrants are available, they must be offered any appropriate vacancy for which they are referred. While that procedure takes place, promotions, demotions and reassignments to positions with promotion potential, appointments (including reinstatements and conversions), and transfers are prohibited. When well-qualified Priority 3 registrants are available, only appointments (including reinstatements and conversions) and transfers are prohibited. Exceptions are articulated in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

12. Position offers shall be made to registrants from the highest priority group available in accordance with the provisions of subsection C.11., above. Acceptance or declination of a valid position offer shall result in the registrant's removal from the PPP following appropriate procedural guidance.

13. Qualifications shall be jointly determined by the losing and gaining installations. To be offered the position, the registrant must be determined to be well qualified in accordance with the criteria contained in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)). Losing and gaining activities that do not agree shall submit the matter through the dispute process also described in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)). At each level within the formal dispute process, the deciding official must either render a decision within ten working days or refer the matter to the next review level. Registrants who contend that mistakes have been made, such as in the determination of qualifications or entitlements, may request reconsideration in accordance with procedures established in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

14. Requests for major policy exceptions shall be routed through the appropriate Component Coordinator to the DASD(CPP) for appropriate action. Recurring exceptions will be documented in DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

15. Individuals otherwise eligible for retained grade or pay who are placed through the PPP shall have their pay set in accordance with retained grade or pay provisions. If ineligible for grade or pay retention, individuals placed through the PPP shall have their pay set in the new grade at a step or rate which preserves the last earned rate to the maximum extent possible. However, the last earned rate does not include any rate of pay received while temporarily promoted.

16. Individuals placed through the PPP, other than military spouse preference and family member registrants, shall have their relocation expenses paid in accordance with the provisions of the Joint Travel Regulations, Volume II (reference (g)).

#### **D. RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Director, Defense Logistics Agency, and the Director of Administration and Management (representing the remaining DoD Components), shall designate one Component Coordinator each. Each Component Coordinator shall designate Regional Component Coordinators and Overseas Liaison Coordinators to assist in ensuring efficient operation of the PPP.

2. The DASD(CPP), under the authority, direction, and control of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, shall prescribe PPP policy within the Department of Defense.

3. The Director, Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS), DoD Human Resources Activity, in accordance with policy direction provided by the DASD(CPP), shall:

- a. Develop, issue, and maintain PPP procedures.
- b. Provide overall management, administration, and automated support for the operation and implementation of the PPP, and serve as the principal point of contact for all related matters.

4. The CARE Division, CPMS, shall:

- a. Implement procedural guidance and resolve related operational problems, such as qualification disputes and area of referral determinations;
- b. Conduct program evaluations, staff assistance visits, and surveys to ensure consistency of program operations and to identify and correct operational discrepancies;
- c. Investigate, report, and take appropriate action concerning alleged violations or non-compliance with DoD PPP policies;
- d. Review and approve PPP waiver and exception requests applicable to specific personnel situations, except that any such requests that involve major exceptions or policy matters shall be forwarded through the Director, CPMS, to the DASD(CPP) for appropriate action;
- e. Place specific vacancies on hold; and
- f. Apply specific or area-wide vacancy freeze actions, as appropriate.

5. Civilian Personnel Offices/Human Resources Offices (CPOs/HROs), or regional service centers and their on-site customer support units, shall administer the PPP at their installations and for all functions or installations they support. In this regard, they shall provide PPP counseling to employees, as necessary; accomplish proper registration of eligible employees; ensure proper clearance of all personnel actions subject to the PPP; accomplish placement actions and program action reports; ensure that CPO/HRO staff members have received mandatory PPP training; and inform Commanders and key managers of program requirements and their associated responsibilities.

6. Commanders or heads of installations organizationally responsible for the CPO/HRO function at each installation shall issue a timely written support statement for the DoD PPP and ensure that all managers, supervisors, and staff officials comply with the policy and procedures of the PPP. A CPO/HRO may obtain additional support statements from the appropriate Commander or heads of other supported organizations.

E. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. The DoD PPP operates through the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS). DoD installations must match all covered personnel actions with PPP registrants by entering these actions into the ASARS as soon as a "Request for Personnel Action," Standard Form (SF) 52 or equivalent request, is submitted to the CPO/HRO and personnel action is initiated, or when recruitment begins in anticipation of the receipt of an SF-52. ASARS automatically matches these actions against the names of individuals registered in the PPP. When matches occur, resumes are referred for placement consideration of, and necessary offers to, PPP registrants in accordance with procedural guidance.

2. Only individuals defined as eligible under the policy contained in this Chapter, DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)), and any other pertinent operational guidance may be registered and referred through the PPP.

3. DoD activities may not grant any exceptions to the PPP other than those specified by program policy and procedures contained in this Chapter and DoD 1400.20-1-M (reference (d)).

4. CPOs/HROs shall maintain program documentation in accordance with PPP operational guidance.